

TOWN OF ARLINGTON

Joseph Connelly
Director of Recreation



PARK COMMISSIONERS
Leslie Mayer, Chairperson
Jen Rothenberg, Vice Chair
Shirley Canniff
Donald Vitters
Jim Robillard
Elena Bartholomew, Associate
Peter Hedlund, Associate

Recreation Department

Park and Recreation Commission
Minutes
Tuesday, June 9, 2015
Arlington Senior Center
Approved

The Park and Recreation Commission came to order at 7:00 PM for its meeting in the Arlington Senior Center on Tuesday, June 9, 2015.

Members in attendance included: Shirley Canniff, Leslie Mayer, Jen Rothenberg, Don Vitters, and Associate Member Peter Hedlund. Director of Recreation, Joseph Connelly was also present.

Members from the public: Karen Grossman, Pam Shanley, Naomi Torres-Ortiz, Eric Love, Alexis Moisand, Janet Peluso, Jayme Purinton.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes from May 19, 2015 were approved on a motion by Ms. Rothenberg, seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 4-0.

Open Forum – Public Comments

There were no comments.

Bishop School 5th Grade Gift Request

Ms. Purinton from the Bishop School Parents Association reviewed her proposal to install multiple tether ball polls at Bishop School on Park Commission property. The Commission reviewed the location and discussed whether three or two were appropriate at this time. Mr. Connelly suggested installing two at this time, then assessing the possibility of a third one after the portable classrooms are in place. This would give a better sense of the need and where the best location would be. The Commission discussed having the Rec. Dept. keep a supply of extra balls for the summer and in case they frequently disappear. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the request, seconded by Mr. Vitters and approved 4-0.

Friends of Spy Pond Park - Art Request

Ms. Grossman reviewed a request to have the Friends of Spy Pond Park purchase the Mastodon art piece from the "Art Rocks Spy" temporary art display to permanently install in the park. The Commission discussed the application and request.

The Commission was bothered to learn that there were artworks still on display at the park, as all should have been removed at the end of the event. The Commission commented that the installation method agreed on for a temporary installation may not be appropriate for a permanent art installation.

The Commission discussed the assumption of liability options with Ms. Grossman. The artist of the Mastodon does not want to take on any liability for permanent display of the piece. The Commission stated that the only other option was for the artist or the FOSPP to gift the piece to the Town - then if the Town chooses to install this piece of art in the park, the Town would take on the liability.

Mr. Vitters stated that in his mind Spy Pond Park is not conducive to permanent art displays. The Commission discussed the circumstances and process for the Kevin Duffy Swan that is on display in the

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park. Mr. Connelly stated that it was a temporary art piece on a two year loan and that Mr. Duffy signed off on all waivers of liability for the piece per Town Counsel recommendation.

The Commission stated that they really could not make a decision tonight because the application they had in front of them was for the Mastodon to be removed in November with the artist acknowledging acceptance of the liability. The change in the nature of the application from a extending the temporary display by a few months to a permanent installation without the artist or FOSPP taking the liability make the application completely different. Mr. Connelly advised Ms. Grossman that the application was also supposed to first go in front of the Public Arts Committee and a letter from them in support or against the display of this work as public art would then be sent to the Commission for consideration.

The Commission further discussed several concerns with the process with Ms. Grossman. Mr. Connelly was asked to discuss some of the concerns with Ms. Arch, who was responsible for the art event.

Ms. Grossman asked Mr. Connelly about a broken portable restroom in the park. Mr. Connelly will call the vendor to have the unit changed out.

Ms. Grossman also asked that signs be placed in the park to not allow bicycles on the aggregate pathway.

Mr. Connelly and Ms. Mayer stated that this request should be sent in writing for discussion at a future meeting and that input would be solicited from the Bicycle Advisory Committee and Town Counsel.

Ms. Grossman asked that signs be placed not allowing people/kids in planting beds. The Commission felt that there is already too much signage at the park and that these signs would most likely be ignored.

Thorndike Field Temporary Lighting Request

The Commission discussed this request from the Arlington Soccer Club. Mr. Connelly reviewed the public hearing results. Ms. Rothenberg motioned to approve the pilot program for the 2015 fall season for 4-6 temporary light fixtures to be used at Thorndike, as long as the lights are off by 9 pm each evening.

The motion was seconded by Ms. Canniff and approved 4-0.

Special Requests

LARP – Use of Menotomy Rocks Park – Mr. Connelly reviewed the incident with the LARP (Live Action Role Play) group at Menotomy Rocks Park. Mr. Love and Mr. Moisand also described the incident and the course of events that took place, including an administrative mix-up at their office.

Mr. Connelly stated that ordering a portable restroom for the event and requesting a birthday party permit for this type of event were both inappropriate. The Commission discussed the expectation for what constitutes acceptable birthday party permitting and directed Mr. Connelly to seek more information when reviewing birthday party requests.

Mr. Love explained a little bit about the Arlington LARP program. Highlighting that they don't completely take over a park, have a signal to immediately cease performances if someone from the public enters the area, their impeccable safety record and that all staff is CORI/SORI reviewed and fingerprinted.

Ms. Shanley and Ms. Peluso spoke highly on LARP's behalf. Mr. Vitters discussed the type of performances, and Mr. Moisand reviewed the current numbers in Arlington.

Ms. Mayer and Mr. Connelly stated that if the group is operating on behalf of a Town organization, such as ACA or Community Ed, then the sponsoring non-profit organization should request the permit. If, on

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the other hand, it is an event that is part of the private offerings of LARP, operating independently as an LLC, where a fee for service is collected then the event is not allowed in a public park. Though LARP may request a permit for a private offering if it is free and open to the public. The Commission reviewed the different scenarios with the LARP representatives.

Mr. Connelly did state that just because an event is technically allowed does not mean that it would be automatically approved. Any request still has to be presented in detail to the Commission. Factors such as time of year, day of the week, number of people and the nature of the event can also affect the permitting decision.

Commission Topic Leader Discussion

Off Leash Park and Program – Mr. Connelly stated that Animal Control Officer Amanda Kennedy was leaving the Town of Arlington for a position with the City of Boston. The Commission discussed how they could take an active role in enforcement of off-leash hours. Mr. Connelly will talk to Town Counsel regarding what options may be at their disposal.

Capital Projects Update

Spy Pond Tennis Courts - Mr. Connelly updated the Commission on the tennis court reconstruction, stating that a sewer line had been hit during construction and repaired. However, it was discovered that additional permanent sewer line work was needed, and DPW would be assisting with the funding for this work. Mr. Connelly stated that the tennis backstop wall would be replaced with a prefabricated unit that would save on costs. Despite the extra work, the project was currently still on schedule.

ADA and Capital Budget Review - Mr. Connelly stated that through the Town's IHCD contacts a landscape architect has been contacted to assist with the planning and bidding of the smaller ADA renovation projects for the next fiscal year.

Other

The meeting was adjourned at 10:26 pm
Respectfully Submitted:
Joseph Connelly, Director of Recreation

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